



Lamoine Board of Selectmen

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Minutes of August 12, 2010

Chair Jo Cooper called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

Present were: Selectmen Gary McFarland, Cynthia Donaldson, Richard Fennelly Jr., William Brann, S. Josephine Cooper; Administrative Assistant Stu Marckoon, William, Duncan and Blake Haass, Tony Hessert, Assessor Jane Fowler, Assessor Michael Jordan, and Local School Advisory Committee member Brett Jones.

Agenda Review – No changes were proposed to the printed agenda or addendum

Minutes of July 8, 2010 – Jo moved to approve the minutes as written. Gary 2nd. **Vote in favor was 5-0.**

Warrant 2 – Stu noted Selectmen signed expenditure warrant 2 on July 21, 2010. There were no questions regarding the warrant.

Warrant 3 – Selectmen signed expenditure warrant 3 in the amount of \$52,821.72.

Oil Pre-purchase – Stu reported the town could lock in the price with No Frills Oil at \$2.49/gallon for the upcoming heating season. Cynthia moved to approve. Richard 2nd. **Vote in favor was 5-0.**

Checking Account Reconciliation – Selectmen signed the statement expressing satisfaction with the reconciliation of the checking account

Cash & Budget Reports – Stu reported revenues for FY 2010 were extremely close to the overall budget, though interest and excise tax collections were down significantly.

Excise Tax Report – Selectmen briefly reviewed the quarterly excise tax report. Stu reported collections for the current fiscal year are a bit ahead of projection – but the previous fiscal year was not pretty.

Audit Engagement Letter – Jo moved to sign the engagement letter with James Wadman, CPA. Richard 2nd. **Vote in favor was 5-0.**

Property Tax Receipting – Stu reported that the office has done away with hand written tax receipts and instead is entering them directly into the computer database. He said that has made the receipting system a lot more accurate and much less time consuming.

Hodgkins Trust Suit – Stu reported the process has begun to change the terms of the trust left to the town by Leurene Hodgkins which involves filing a lawsuit against the town. He said it's a positive matter and should free up some capital funding faster than expected from the trust.

Septage End Site Contract – Jo moved to approve renewing a 3-year contract with Haslam Septic. Richard 2nd. Richard asked if anything had changed. Stu said only the dates. **Vote in favor was 5-0, Selectmen signed the contract.**

Urban/Rural Initiative Program (MDOT Local Roads) – Selectmen signed the form accepting state money for road assistance.

RSU 24 Interim Representative – Stu reported that three people had expressed interest in the job; Brett Jones, Nathan Mason and Kathleen Rybarz. He said Ms. Rybarz indicated that she would be interested only if no one else were. Cynthia said she would propose to ask Mr. Jones if he would fill the position until November 2nd. Richard said he concurred. Cynthia noted that Mr. Jones was on the Selectboard during the development of the RSU. Jo said she would hope to see interest in the Local School Advisory Committee encouraged. She said maybe Mr. Mason would be willing to serve on the Advisory Committee. Mr. Jones said Mr. Mason attends the RSU meetings and would be a good choice for the Advisory Committee.

Jo moved to appoint Mr. Jones as the Interim Representative to the RSU 24 Board. Richard 2nd. **Vote in favor was 5-0.**

Deputy Registrar of Voters – Stu noted that his appointment as Deputy Registrar had run out at the end of June, and suggested that he be reappointed through the end of November to coincide with the Registrar's appointment. Jo so moved, Richard 2nd. **Vote in favor was 5-0.**

Town Meeting Format – Cynthia reported that no more surveys have been returned in the past couple of weeks and she would like to close down the survey. There was no objection. She handed out a report compiling the responses from the 149 returned surveys which she encouraged the board to take home and read over. She said she broke out the survey by responses and the comments were very interesting. She said the number of people responding is indicative that people want to talk about the issue, which is what the Board wanted to happen. She said she was very pleased by the response.

Walker Road Concern – Stu reported that he had received a complaint via e-mail regarding an individual in the Walker Road area and he sent a response to the e-mailer and copied the Selectmen on it. He said he's not sure what the town could or should do. Jo said some community education may be needed. Stu said his biggest concern is safety, and if the individual in question does something inappropriate, law enforcement should be called. William noted that the complainant said she had called the Hancock County Sheriff's Department. Stu said he knows that deputies have had interactions with the individual.

Tony Hessert asked if the complaint involved visible clothing. Jo said the complaint was about the individual coming to the complainant's house and bothering her.

Fire Department Theft – Stu reported that he's been chronicling the incident and that was placed in the Selectmen packets. Mr. Jones reported the Security Camera which was hooked up to the stolen computer is still present at the fire station, but part of it might be missing.

Stu asked if the deductible fund could cover the various losses. Jo moved to approve that, Gary 2nd. **Vote in favor was 5-0.**

Stu asked if background checks on all applicants should be run. Jo said if a background check is done for one person, it should be done for all. Richard asked if there was any consensus from the fire department. Jo said it's important to be consistent. Stu reports he does an annual driver's license check. Jo suggested putting a line on the application to sign off on a background check.

Recycling Grant – Stu suggested that transfer station manager Bill Fennelly could look into that. There was no objection.

Elected Officials Workshop – Stu noted the dates for an Elected Official's Workshop and a Collaboration Workshop are coming up in October and November. There was a brief discussion.

Goals – Business Development – Jo asked if the Selectmen have followed up on anything with the business development meeting held in May. She said at least two other towns are interested in doing the same thing.

Jo asked when and how something should be done. She asked if it should be assigned to a committee or to the Planning Board. Richard said the Planning Board should be involved. Stu provided some anecdotes on recent economic development inquiries by boat building companies. Jo said there should be a process established when someone wants to locate a business in town. She said a special meeting could be held to do just that. Richard said it would be helpful to learn what the perceived obstacles are to business ventures.

Mr. Jones noted the site plan review and subdivision ordinances overlap a lot, and those should be looked at. He said a long range planning committee recommended that zoning be reviewed. He said from time to time the Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed, but that's a big effort which can be costly and beyond the town's control.

Stu said he could put that on the September Planning Board Agenda. Michael Jordan noted the Planning Board is always looking at the ordinances, and there is a workshop in September.

Broadband Opportunities – There was a brief discussion about how Premium Choice works. Richard said they should be held accountable for their coverage claims. Mr. Jones asked if there has been any effort to contact Time Warner or Fairpoint about expanding into underserved areas. It was suggested that Time Warner be contacted.

Revenue Sources – There was a brief discussion about the cell phone tower

The Big Picture – Selectmen agreed that continuing to meet with appointed committees and officials is a good idea, and the calendar should be re-generated.

Celebrating Identity of the Town – Cynthia noted the sculpture dedication at Lamoine State Park is August 21st from 12-2. Selectmen also agreed to hold their next meeting at the school on September 2, 2010 at 6PM and attend the Jina's Gym dedication at 7PM.

Update Town Policy Manual – Stu said he's making slow progress

Waterfront Access Issues – It was suggested this be referred to the Conservation Commission.

Participation in Town Government by younger people – Jo noted the recent high school choice vote involved a lot of young people and they should be encouraged to serve on appointed boards. It was suggested that student groups could be invited to meet with the Selectmen from time to time, and maybe the Board could hold a daytime meeting at the School.

Stu suggested maybe having a town Facebook page, as many folks in the community participate in this social media.

Selectmen asked that a goals item be placed on the agenda each quarter.

Vacations – Stu reported he would be on vacation next week and Town Clerk Jennifer Kovacs would be on vacation Labor Day week.

Assessors Concern – Security – Assessing Board chair Jane Fowler said the Selectmen got a copy of an e-mail message she generated following their last meeting. She said it was to bring a situation to the attention of the Selectmen.

Street sign thefts – Stu reported that at least 18-signs are missing in the latest rash of thefts. He asked for permission to replace the signs. Jo so moved, Gary 2nd. **Vote in favor was 5-0.**

Mowing – There was no objection to having Road Commissioner Jordan obtain bids from mowing contractors and to award the job.

Database Update – Stu reported that it is time to upgrade the database program the town uses, and the cost is about \$400. Selectmen had no objection to the purchase.

County Budget Meeting – The Budget Caucus will be held on September 9, 2010 at the Trenton Town Office.

Other – Mr. Hessert asked if there was any information about the Sculpture Dedication on August 21st. Stu said there is a poster on the bulletin board which is also posted on the town's website.

Next Meetings – Selectmen reviewed the meeting dates set for the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month through February.

Concern from William Haass – Mr. Haass said his mother (Barbara Davis) was upset with the tree growth penalties imposed in 2008. He said they met with the Board of Assessors and got nowhere. Mrs. Fowler said Mr. Haass has no standing in the matter.

Mr. Haass said the Assessors have a dictatorship and don't have to answer to the Selectmen. He began to review the case. Cynthia asked if this was the appropriate forum for airing unhappiness. Richard said he's open to public comment as long as it's civil. Mr. Haass said when he leaves this evening; he doesn't expect anything to change. He said the situation has been a financial and mental burden. Mrs. Fowler said she didn't think Mr. Haass has a right to malign the Board of Assessors. She said nothing Mr. Haass will say is going to change from previous meetings, and the Assessors present will not be discussing the Davis case this evening. She said there is nothing for the Selectmen to act on.

Mr. Haass said he has sat here for hours and gotten nowhere. He reviewed the case. He said the Assessors answer to no one. Mr. Jones said they answer to the voters. Mr. Haass said Pamela Strong of the Board of Property Tax Review told him the Assessors were wrong. He said he sent Mrs. Strong a DVD copy of an Assessors meeting. He said their attorney said the assessors don't have a leg to stand on. He said his mother filed an abatement request, and their attorney sent an abatement request. He said they got a letter from Stu asking that they meet with the assessors, and nothing happened. He said his mother is well over \$50,000 in debt. He said the Assessors are voted in by the people, and the law says they should have helped his mother at the beginning.

Jo said Mrs. Davis has an attorney, and it gets expensive when attorneys get involved. Mr. Haass said somebody's going to pay for that. He said he is thoroughly frustrated. Jo said she understands that Mr. Haass is frustrated, but the Board of Selectmen cannot do anything about it. Mr. Haass said he just wanted the Selectmen to listen. Cynthia said the Selectmen have done that before – though only one side is being heard and the folks on the other side can't respond. Mr. Haass said the Assessors won't talk.

Mrs. Fowler said she didn't recall that Stu was asked to send a letter. She said that last Wednesday (August 4, 2010) the Assessors never got a chance to talk with Mrs. Davis or her attorney. She said Mr. Haass was at the meeting and exploded, and that was the end of the evening. She said the Board of Assessors can't talk about the case. There was a brief discussion about open forums at the Selectmen's meetings.

Jo said everyone has a perspective, and the role of the Selectmen is to do what they are supposed to do. Mr. Jones said the Selectmen are not obligated to provide a forum –

and perhaps some policy for the manual should be determined. There was a brief discussion about a public forum policy.

Mr. Jordan said most forms of government include a written agenda, and people show up and know the topic. There was more discussion about open forums. Cynthia said people should not be impugned, and a discussion followed on when things get personal and conducting business civilly.

Mrs. Fowler said they would like to put this matter behind them, and that's where the board is headed. She said it's not been fun. A short discussion of the previous Board of Assessors meeting followed in regard to the confrontation with Mr. Haass.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Stu Marckoon, Adm. Asst.

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